

## Female entrepreneurs get R95,000 boost

Three young female entrepreneurs in the hospitality and tourism industries have received a cash injection from the South African Breweries (SAB) Ltd totalling R95,000.

By [Bathandwa Mbola](#) 4 Apr 2008

This through a pilot initiative called the Women in Business which was recently unveiled by the company.

The initiative aims at shaping a culture of entrepreneurship among previously disadvantaged women.

Simnikiwe Sondlo of Niki's Oasis in Newtown, Letta Munyai from Lala's Florist and Catering Services in Rockville and Mopane of Maseke's Place in Dube Village both from Soweto received R45,000, R30,000 and R20,000 respectively from SAB.

For the pilot project, nine women - all over the age of 35, and all of whom already have established businesses - were chosen to participate in the initiative which includes training workshops and mentoring.

For a number of years SAB has been aware of a pressing need for such an initiative, said SAB's information officer, Eleni Matsicas.

"The prevalence of women in larger and more established businesses is minimal in South Africa and through this programme we will be providing much needed support to women entrepreneurs in the tourism sector.

"By providing these established entrepreneurs with the necessary skills and mentorship, they will be empowered to let their businesses be elevated to the next level," she said.

### Training programme

The candidates of the programme were put through an intensive 10 week course at the School of Tourism and Hospitality in Johannesburg.

Subjects included legal and regulatory compliance; financial management and in particular costing and pricing; inventory management and marketing.

The participants were then mentored by restaurateurs and successful entrepreneurs within their industry.

Once training and mentoring was completed, the women were asked to draw up a business plan, which was then presented to the judges who awarded grants to the top three.

According to Moira Allison, one of the judges, the Women in Business candidates all showed remarkable passion and enthusiasm for their businesses.

"It was a difficult choice. One can see that they are all held in high regard by their customers and we are certain that they will all continue to flourish and grow.

"There is no doubt that this programme has been highly beneficial to them and appreciated."

This year's SAB Women in Business Awards was a pilot programme and focused on candidates in Gauteng.

Based on the success of this year's event, SAB aims to roll out the programme nationally.

"We are exploring a partnership with the Tourism Enterprise Propeller to ensure an effective rollout.

"They have existing ties with SMME's in the tourism sector which will enable us to effectively target those entrepreneurs who would benefit most from SAB's Women in Business initiative," Matsicas explained.

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